



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO IMPORTING 61.15 KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE WORTH ALMOST 1 MILLION DOLLARS ON STREETS OF TUCSON

TUCSON, ARIZONA -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on January 6, 2004, Rito Castro-Parra, (D.O.B. May 22, 1942), of Sonora, Mexico, pled guilty to Possession with Intent to Distribute 61.15 kilograms of Cocaine, Importation of 61.15 kilograms of Cocaine, Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute 61.15 kilograms of Cocaine, and Conspiracy to Import 61.15 Kilograms of Cocaine, in federal district court in Tucson, Arizona.

Rito Castro-Parra, had been charged with violating Title 21 of the United States Code, Sections 841(a), 846, 952, and 960. On August 24, 2003, the defendant drove a 1999 Nissan Pathfinder from Mexico into the Grand Avenue Port of Entry, in Nogales, Arizona. United States Customs Inspectors discovered that the Pathfinder contained 61.15 net kilograms of cocaine hidden within the ceiling of the vehicle. Rito Castro-Parra was to be paid \$15,000.00 to transport the cocaine to Phoenix, Arizona.

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A conviction for the crimes in which the defendant pled guilty each carry a maximum penalty of life in prison, a \$4,000,000.00 fine or both.

Sentencing is set before Judge Frank R. Zapata on March 19, 2004.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Nogales, Arizona.

The prosecution is being handled by Fred W. Slaughter, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03 1851 FRZ
RELEASE NUMBER: 2004-003

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